

BOLIVIA

Date of Elections: 14 July 1985

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament following premature dissolution of this body. General elections were not normally due until 1986.

Characteristics of Parliament

The bicameral Parliament of Bolivia, the Congress, is composed of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

The Senate has 27 members - 3 for each of the country's 9 departments.

The Chamber of Deputies has 130 members.

All parliamentarians are elected for 4 years.

Electoral System

All Bolivian citizens who are at least 21 years of age (or 18, if they are married) are entitled to vote.

A Deputy must be a Bolivian by birth who is at least 25 years of age, has fulfilled his military obligation, is literate, has not been condemned to corporal punishment and has no charges or writs of execution pending against him; the age requirement for being Senator is 35.

The office of member of Congress is incompatible with that of Minister, diplomatic agent, civil servant or employee, military or police officer on active duty, contractor for public works or services, and official of a State-related company or enterprise; certain ecclesiastics may also not simultaneously be members.

Candidates for Congress are nominated by political parties or certain legally-established citizens' groups affiliated to such parties. Deputies and Senators are elected by direct and universal suffrage.

General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

It will be recalled that the results of the June 1980 congressional elections were annulled in the wake of the following month's coup d'Etat. In October 1982, the bicameral Congress was restored. The 1985 elections were first set for June but postponed by one month in March due to disruption of voter registration by a general strike. Largely because of persistent economic and labour-related problems, they were called a year ahead of schedule by outgo-

ing President of the Republic Hernan Siles Zuazo of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement of the Left (MNRI) party.

As is the custom in Bolivia, the congressional poll was held simultaneously with that for President. Main contenders for the latter post were retired Gen. Hugo Banzer Suarez of the right-wing Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) party and Dr. Victor Paz Estenssoro of the centre-right Historic Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNRH). Both men promised extensive reforms to counter the country's ailing economy (especially runaway inflation) and social measures to better the lot of the citizenry.

Polling day was marked by a heavy turnout. Both presidential candidates fell short of the required absolute majority, the definitive election thus being left to Congress. In the legislative races, MNRH was the overall winner with 59 seats (43 Deputies and 16 Senators) to ADN's 51 (41 Deputies and 10 Senators).

On 4 August, the newly-elected Congress met to choose between the leading presidential candidates. In its second vote the next day, Dr. Paz Estenssoro gained the necessary support to assume the post he had held twice previously. On 7 August, a new Cabinet was sworn in.

Statistics

1. *Distribution of Seats in the Congress*

Political Group	Votes obtained	Number of Seats in Chamber of „ Deputies	
Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN)	493,735	41	10
Historic Nationalist Revolution- ary Movement (MNRH) . .	456,704	43	16
Revolutionary Leftist Movement (MIR).	153,143	15	1
Nationalist Revolutionary Move- ment of the Left (MNRI) . .	82,418	8	—
Vanguard Nationalist Revolu- tionary Movement (MNRV) .	72,197	6	—
Socialist Party-One (PS-1)	38,782	5	—
United People's Front (FPU) . .	38,124	4	
<i>Tupaj Katari</i> Revolutionary Liberation Movement (MRTKL).	31,678		
Christian Democratic Party (PDC).	24,079	3	
Bolivian Socialist <i>Falange</i> (FSB)	19,575	3	
		130	27